

THE ROLE OF THE CIA IN THE GLOBAL OIL CONSPIRACY

The price of oil should not be measured in US dollars, it should be measured in human lives!

By Joe Vialls

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For decades the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) has coveted global domination, not with the consent of the American people but rather by directing the actions of the American President as a child pulls the strings of a limp puppet. The term 'New World Order' was coined back in the late sixties by the CIA, not by a democratically elected leader of the American people. With the collapse of the USSR, the CIA saw its chance and pushed for global domination by manipulation of world oil resources. Its prime objective of developing the vast but little-known oil reserves in the British-dominated Falkland Islands had been frustrated since the early 1980s by oil prices too low to finance expensive Falklands exploration. Intending to 'bounce' oil prices high enough by forcibly reducing Middle East oil production, all the CIA needed was an excuse, which was 'miraculously' provided in 1990 by President Hussein of Iraq.

As American Ambassador to the United Nations and the Bush Administration's champion for compulsory US democracy, Thomas Reeve Pickering cut a dashing figure. Tall and urbane, he looked the perfect statesman as he hurled vitriolic remarks at the countries of the Middle East. There is little doubt that after sustained exposure, most television viewers believed Pickering's carefully structured UN presentations.

Enter 'Thomas Reeve Pickering' into any counter-intelligence computer and the machine groans with agony as it struggles to flood the screen with an overwhelming mass of data. Tanzania? Jordan? Washington's war on Nicaragua? Pickering was around for all of them and many more. He was even in El Salvador during the period the CIA supervised the 'Death Squads' responsible for the torture, assassination and disappearance of more innocent people than could be counted.

It is possible, though unlikely, that the numbers who died in El Salvador might have exceeded those who died at the hands of the Shah's hated 'Savak' secret police in Iran. As with the death squads in El Salvador, Savak had its torture and assassination techniques honed to perfection by the CIA.

Back in 1974 Victor Marchetti, formerly an Executive Assistant to the Deputy Director of the CIA, wrote of the 'New Order' then being planned at Langley headquarters. He explained in chilling terms why resignation was his only honourable choice:

"And there was a diabolical invention that might be called a mini-cannon... There were a number of uses for the mini-cannon, one of which was demonstrated to us using an old army school bus. It was fastened to the gasoline tank in such a fashion that the incendiary projectile would rupture the tank and fling flaming gasoline the length of the bus interior, incinerating anyone inside. It was my lot to show the rest of the class how easily it could be done. It worked, my God, how it worked. It was, I guess, the moment of truth. What did a busload of burning people have to do with freedom? What right did I have, in the name of democracy and the CIA, to decide that random victims should die? The intellectual game was over. I had to leave."

THE MIDDLE EAST

Victor Marchetti resigned before the CIA decided to target the Middle East in its attempt to shift primary oil production from the Persian Gulf to the Falkland Islands. However, evidence the CIA maintained its vicious determination to murder random innocent victims by the thousand was soon to be provided in the Middle East with sickening massacres in both Iraq and Kuwait.

The CIA's first priority was 'putting men on the ground' in the Middle East as Intelligence operatives. Despite the sophistication of reconnaissance satellites, there was no substitute for human beings capable of infiltrating and undermining foreign governments—the Agency's normal method of operation.

From the outset, the CIA recognised two countries in particular would be very difficult to undermine easily: Iraq and Libya. The Agency infiltrated the Kurdish population in

the north of Iraq but failed to gain the influence it needed. Sceptical readers should note that all Kurds inside Iraq are now known as "Freedom Fighters" while their brethren north of the border in NATO Turkey are labelled "Terrorists".

The governments of Iraq and Libya had managed to foil dozens of CIA attempts aimed not only at infiltration but also at assassinating the Iraqi and Libyan heads of state. One CIA report written in 1985 referred to a failed attempt to murder Colonel Al Qadhafi, stating the hired killers were inefficient. Ex-CIA Deputy Director John McMahan echoed the criticism.

THE GULF WAR

If Middle East oil production was to be drastically reduced to increase world oil prices to the point where the Falklands oil reserves could be exploited, the timing of the CIA's Gulf 'war' was critical. Equally critical was the need for large numbers of sneak bombing attacks on Middle East civilians in order to shatter public morale as quickly as possible.

On 12 July 1990 during a small ceremony at the Lockheed "Skunk Works" in California, the last of 59 deadly F117A stealth bombers was handed over to its new owners: the 37th Tactical Fighter Wing, normally hidden deep in the remote Nevada desert at its secret 'black' air base at Tonopah.

Though the F117A was labelled the "Stealth Fighter" in order to deceive American taxpayers, it was no such thing. The F117A was designed using low-visibility data provided by the CIA as a black project killing-machine capable only of slaughtering under the cloak of darkness, very much in the tradition of assassins of old. Nor was the F117A very accurate: during the only operational mission before the Gulf débâcle, two stealth bombers attacked an army barracks in Panama where both missed their targets completely. There would be many more 'misses' in the densely populated city of Baghdad.

Three weeks after the last stealth bomber flew into Tonopah, Iraqi forces invaded Kuwait and the 37th Tactical Fighter Wing was given a new commander, Colonel Alton Whitley. Within four hours of Whitley taking command, the stealth bombers were ordered to fly to Saudi Arabia via Langley Air Force Base in Virginia under cover of darkness. The United Nations had not yet responded to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, but the stealth bombers were already being positioned for their attacks.

The CIA was well aware of President Hussein's armed forces massing to the north of the Kuwaiti border during 1990. Despite the fact it had many days of advance warning, the CIA failed to tell the Kuwaiti government of the forthcoming attack. With all the sophisticated communications at its disposal it was a truly damning omission that escaped Western media attention, pointing directly at CIA manipulation of the invasion itself.

CIA MANIPULATION OF THE MEDIA

Millions of television viewers watched the most damning evidence of CIA premeditation but most failed to recognise it. Though European troops were rushed to the Gulf in out-of-date ill-fitting desert camouflage, there was no such problem for the US forces. Despite the fact America has never fought a large-scale desert campaign, nearly a quarter of a million US troops arrived in Saudi Arabia wearing well-fitting post-Vietnam-pattern desert camouflage. Someone somewhere had done a vast amount of covert advance planning and purchasing for the desert campaign, because no nation on Earth keeps a quarter million uniforms on hand for every different climate zone in the world.

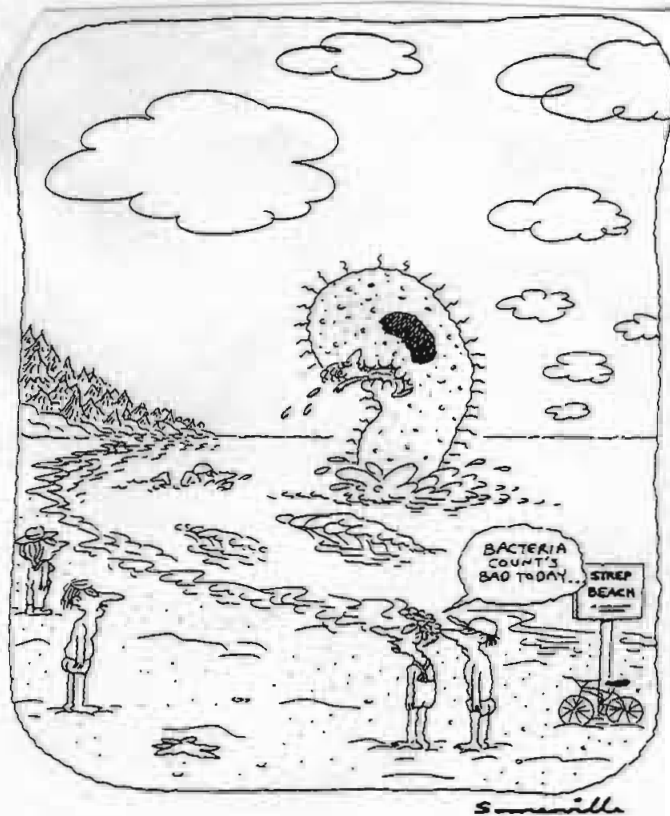
From that point forward, white became black and black became white—courtesy of the CIA "Psychological & Paramilitary Staff" unit operating under the direction of the Deputy Director Plans (DDP). For decades the unit has specialised in deception and abuse at the psychological level, fitting it perfectly for the role of turning both President Hussein and Colonel Al Qadhafi into 'non-democratic dictators' in the eyes of the West.

The most memorable (and successful) of the ploys used was to turn President Hussein into the man who 'gassed his own Kurds' at Halabja. The same devastating images of dead women and children lying in the streets were shown thousands of times on all Western television channels, placing President Hussein well beyond Western 'rehabilitation' under any circumstances.

Unfortunately the entire exercise was a complete lie. The CIA knew very well that a February 1990 US Army War College report concluded Iraq was not responsible for the Halabja attack, stating "that it was the Iranian bombardment that had actually killed the Kurds". The War College findings were hardly surprising: the Kurdish people of Halabja were killed by a war gas known as Phosgene used by the Iranians but not the Iraqis. Though Iraq did use war gas on the battlefield, it was Mustard, an entirely different chemical which causes death in a visibly different way, enabling US Army chemical warfare experts to easily identify the attack as Iranian in origin.

Though many readers may say "So what?", the distinction is important in identifying CIA media techniques used to deliberately distort the perception of the Western public. When the US Administration was looking for an excuse to use ground forces to finish off the people in Kuwait, the CIA flashed a story round the

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world about Iraqi soldiers ripping newborn Kuwaiti babies out of their incubators and throwing them on the floor. As with the Kurds of Halabja the story was proved totally false, though not before US tanks had buried 8,000 Iraqi soldiers alive in their bunkers and destroyed half the ground installations in Kuwait and southern Iraq. Disinformation is critically important to the CIA, for without it the Agency would be unable to whip up sufficient public outrage to justify its savage attacks.

For an alert Western public there were other indications that neither President Hussein nor Colonel Al Qadhafi were dictators who habitually murdered their own citizens. If that were the case, there would be no point in both of them training huge numbers of doctors, for doctors cure people—they do not kill. While Saudi Arabia and Great Britain (two of the coalition partners) have only one doctor for every 4,321 and 4,632 people respectively, Iraq has one doctor for every 2,303. Colonel Al Qadhafi has trained a stunning one doctor for every 757 people. Facts like these were considered counter-productive to the CIA's aims and were ruthlessly suppressed.

Boosted by CIA lies and disinformation, the Bush Administration pushed with indecent haste for military action against President Hussein. After successfully applying pressure to the United Nations Security Council, the Bush Administration ordered its stealth bombers to attack the capital of Iraq instead of the forces occupying Kuwait. Under cover of darkness during the night of 16-17 January 1991, the first F117As flew out of Khamis Mushait in southern Saudi Arabia to start the killing in Baghdad. The 'black' stealth bombers were to fly a total of 1,271 missions in less than six weeks, dropping more than five million pounds of bombs on populated areas.

The total bombardment was awesome and sickening: 88,000 tons of bombs, 97% of which flew wide of their targets, ripping more than 70,000 innocent women and children to bloody shreds and maiming countless thousands more. Sadly, the Iraqi dead were merely a sideshow for the primary CIA objective of controlling world oil reserves on a permanent basis.

Around 16 February 1991, American AV8B Harrier ground-attack jets started flying with wing-mounted napalm pods. Less than a week later, on 22 February President Bush accused Iraqi forces of lighting 140-plus oil wells in Kuwait. If the Iraqi forces had done so, they managed it while under continual attack by about 2,500 coalition aircraft—an act of crass stupidity or outstanding bravery in the face of stupefying American firepower.

Somehow the Western media missed the point that napalm burns at a temperature high enough to melt the side-pipes on oil well-heads and is capable of setting fire to the crude oil which then blasts out under high pressure. Most of the public also remained unaware that CIA pilots are cross-trained to fly a large variety of both military and civilian aircraft. During this precise period Kuwaiti Air Force pilots were grounded in Saudi Arabia on the orders of the American Commander in Chief.

It is left to the reader to speculate why the US High Command ensured that no native Kuwaiti pilot be allowed to fly over his own oil fields during this specific phase of the operation.

Within 24 hours of the Bush accusation, the Iraqi government denied setting fire to the oil wells and urgently called on the United Nations Security Council to send a team to "investigate the destruction of non-military installations in Kuwait"—a curious response from the Iraqi government if it was guilty of the alleged crime. The American-dominated Security Council dismissed the

request out of hand.

When the Iraqis retreated from Kuwait, American forces violated mutually agreed cease-fire terms, shooting more people in the back with radioactive 30 mm Depleted Uranium (DU) shells than Adolf Hitler could have imagined in his most vivid dream. Unluckily for its human targets, the CIA was out to prove Adolf Hitler a mere simpleton with a strictly limited imagination.

American Fairchild A10 "Thunderbolt II" ground-attack jets criss-crossed the highways of death in Kuwait, spitting radioactive 30 mm shells at the rate of 4,200 per minute per aircraft. Anyone left alive after the strafing runs, the CIA reasoned, would probably die a terrible death much later from the effects of toxic uranium poisoning. Over time, the same highly toxic radioactive waste would slowly kill large numbers of the civilian population in both Iraq and Kuwait. Though larger 120 mm DU shells were used by battle tanks, the US administration claims 'only' 5,000 of the 120 mm version were fired.

There is only one gun capable of firing the special high-velocity radioactive 30 mm DU shells: the GAU-8A seven-barrel "Avenger" Gatling cannon, specially designed for the Thunderbolt. Even at a range of two miles, the 30 mm DU shells are known to be travelling at almost one mile per second, hitting each target with almost half a million foot-pounds of energy. With impact forces that high, very few 30 mm DUs ricocheted and stayed in one piece, most exploding into uranium dust which was strewn far and wide across the land.

The awesome Avenger Gatling is capable of firing depleted uranium at the rate of nearly 12 tonnes per minute per gun. Small wonder the US administration remains acutely anxious that the total number of 30 mm DU shells fired should remain "Classified".

THE OIL MEN TAKE CONTROL

Shortly after driving the Iraqi forces out of Kuwait, the American government handed total control of Kuwaiti oil operations to Bechtel Corporation—an American multinational giant originally founded by CIA Deputy Director John McMahon. Former Bechtel corporate presidents and vice presidents include George Schultz and Caspar Weinberger. It was an odd choice. Bechtel excels chiefly in the area of civil construction. Unfortunately the problem it faced was 'upstream' oil technology involving oil well blowouts raging at up to 11,000 p.s.i.

By June 1991 the coordinator of the well-control teams, T.B. O'Brien of Midland, Texas, complained of Bechtel slowing down the rate of damage control by going through a long slow bidding process for equipment that could be had 'off the shelf' in Dubai, a short distance away down the Persian Gulf.

"In the meantime, about US\$40 million to US\$50 million in oil burns a day, but nobody looks at that," Mr O'Brien said. "These things are not an emergency to them."

After months of increasing pressure from world environmentalists about the smoke then circling the globe at high altitude, there was an apparent acceleration in well control efforts. On 6 November 1991, Sheikh Jabir-al-Ahmad al-Jabir al Sabah was shown on television throwing a lever that put out the last of the fires which had raged since February. It was a public relations masterpiece and most world environmentalists immediately stopped worrying about possible global environmental effects. They were wrong to stop worrying, for their worst nightmares are

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probably yet to come in the Falklands.

OIL DISCOVERED UNDER THE FALKLANDS

During late 1981 an obscure document was circulated around a small select group of Western oil multinationals. The data it contained was staggering and details swiftly leaked. In a recently completed comprehensive seismic survey of the Falkland Islands continental shelf, realistic estimates indicated oil reserves more than ten times larger than those in Saudi Arabia. For anyone with the wealth to exploit the reserves, the magnitude of the prize was almost beyond comprehension.

That the seismic was accurate was proved beyond doubt by the mid-1980s, by which time Argentina had proven reserves of more than four billion barrels on its Patagonian coast directly opposite the Falkland Islands. With the continent shelving downwards out to sea, calculations indicated Falkland Islands reserves easily as massive as those predicted in the 1981 document.

During 1982 many Britons wondered aloud at the sheer compassion of their government which sent an entire battle fleet to evict the Argentines who, it was rumoured, were indecently assaulting a few hundred Falklands sheep farmers. It was democracy at its best and countless thousands of patriotic Britons cheered the QEII as she cleared the harbour at Southampton laden with troops for the fight in the South Atlantic.

Democracy? The British government had probably forgotten the sheep farmers a generation before but it knew about the oil reserves, as did the Argentines who managed to obtain a copy of the seismic report. Those oilmen who knew of the seismic report watched the patriotic fervour with amazement but said nothing. If the British public really wanted to believe the Thatcher Government would send a battle fleet 8,000 miles to protect a few farmers, it was not their job to disillusion them...

The American and British governments were excited at the prospect of total oil self-sufficiency and the resulting ability to bypass the Middle East completely for their energy needs. But what if the nations of the Middle East tried to compete with them? The shorter shipping distance from the Persian Gulf to most world markets would still undermine prices. Clearly strategic controls had to be placed on the Middle East first.

The problem the British government faced was twofold: the Falklands were so far away that Britain alone could never hope to explore without the assistance of the Americans; secondly, the ready availability of Middle East crude at low prices would make exploration a financial impossibility. Despite the predictions of some analysts during 1981 that crude oil prices might rise as high as \$80 per barrel by 1985, there was no way of telling if those predictions would become reality. (By 1985 oil prices had in fact slumped dramatically to \$10 per barrel, well below the \$28 minimum needed for Falklands exploration.)

Proof the Arab nations had 'noticed' the Falklands survey was provided in 1982 when OPEC suddenly kicked the bottom out of the price of crude oil. For nearly ten years following the famous price-hike of 1973, western oil multinationals had been using their windfall revenue to build many more oil rigs to drill more and more wells. So frantic was the activity that the total number of rigs drilling under western multinational control rose from around 1,500 in 1973, to just over 4,600 by late 1981.

Disaster swiftly followed the 1982 oil price collapse with more than 3,000 western drilling rigs suddenly idle due to a lack of funds. In other words, the number of active drilling rigs went into

reverse gear, dropping from 4,600+ down to 1,600 in less than nine months from late 1982 to mid-1983. For the oil industry it was a total nightmare with drilling contractors going broke overnight, while hundreds of multimillion-dollar oil rigs sat quietly rusting in the deserts and mountains.

If evidence was ever needed proving the size (and danger) of the Falklands reserves, this was it: the nations of the Middle East flooding world markets with crude oil from massive over-production, and halving their own revenues in order to halt western moves to exploit the massive South Atlantic oil fields. The size of the catastrophe for the western oil multinationals was barely noticed by members of the public, who responded with ill-concealed glee to cheaper petrol prices at the pumps.

Vast oil reserves in the South Atlantic, initially merely tempting, soon became a strategic imperative in the minds of the western oil multinationals, frustrated by their continued inability to raise world oil prices. Reducing Middle East production to earlier, much lower levels was the only way to achieve the objective, but how could it possibly be done? After all, the Arab countries might object to any production controls placed on them. Personnel at CIA headquarters in Langley went to work eagerly searching for the solution.

And so it was that a mere ten years after the Falklands seismic survey of 1981, the firefighters walked away from still-smoking oil well-heads, leaving behind them *two* shattered Arab oil-producing nations: Kuwait and Iraq. Not bad for a first strike.

LIBYA IS NEXT

Combined Arab output before the Iraqi slaughter began was about 13.17 million barrels per day, excluding Iran. Within 40 days both Kuwait and Iraq had stopped production completely, theoretically reducing the daily output by 4.36 million barrels, or 33% of balanced Arab oil output.

The world barely noticed as Saudi Arabia took up the slack and increased output to compensate for lost Kuwaiti and Iraqi production capability. The CIA strategic planners noticed though. What they had done was reduce the number of Arab oil-producing nations by two. If they could also eliminate Libya there would be

another fall of 1.36 million barrels per day, creating a further drop in balanced Arab oil output equalling 10.3%. With all three countries wiped out, the total drop would be more than 43%—nearly half of the total. The three other Arab producing countries considered to be 'friendly' to the US administration could be left for treatment at a later date, as could Iran.

CONNING THE GREENIES

The masses of environmental scientists who swarmed to the Gulf to examine the carnage were skillfully shown slick damage in the Gulf, mines on the beach at Kuwait, smoke in the sky and some low pressure blowouts in the Burgan field. None, including Greenpeace, was allowed to 'stray' into the real problem areas to the north of Kuwait city, or the areas of southern Iraq subjected to carpet-bombing by American B52 heavy bombers from Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean.

Blowout pressures in the north were up to ten times as high as those in Burgan field—a very good reason for keeping unwanted spectators away. John McMahon's old company, Bechtel, subtly directed the flow of traffic away from the 'dangerous' areas. Huge

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lakes of crude oil, no longer burning to atmosphere, increased in size to the point where some roads were impassable.

Within days of Sheikh Jabir-al-Ahmad al-Jabir al Sabah throwing the lever that 'capped' the last of the burning wells, the British World Conservation Monitoring Centre commented on the blowing wells the media cameras somehow missed: "Burning wells cause less pollution damage than non-burning gushers."

It was a factual statement, entirely accurate but understating the case. When an oil well blows out the primary task is to stop the flow of oil from the underground reservoir. Most wells that blow out but fail to light spontaneously are lit as quickly as possible by well-control specialists, in order to keep the volatile oil and explosive gas away from workers in the immediate area. Failure to light the well swiftly can lead to a situation where lakes of oil entrained with explosive gas pose a deadly risk for the well-control specialists themselves.

How were the specialists to control rogue wells surrounded by huge oil lakes, growing larger all the time as they were continually fed with more underground oil and

gas? The British *New Scientist* of 9 November 1991 painted a grim picture of the massive problem the environmentalists had chosen to forget:

"The lakes vary in size and depth but are usually no more than a metre deep. In the northern oilfields, small lakes have run together to form rivers that stretch for many kilometres."

Horrifying stuff, and it got worse. Middle East contacts advised that one of the lakes measured about 8 kilometres by 5 but was 'only' about a metre deep. Only? The capacity of that lake alone to a depth of one metre is 230 million barrels. How many lakes are left, what is their combined capacity and how many rogue wells are still feeding them? Alas, the CIA and NSA are being coy and sitting on the satellite images so details may be withheld until a complete cure is impossible. One thing is certain: the western public will never be told the truth.

THE HUMAN PRICE OF OIL

From the CIA viewpoint Kuwait and Iraq were oil cripples, with savage sanctions 'punishing' the entire civilian population of Iraq by slowly starving women and children to death, while deadly toxic uranium dust worked even more slowly in the south

of Iraq and in Kuwait. Put simply, the CIA was responsible for the clearest case of genocide since Pol Pot butchered more than a million unarmed civilians in Cambodia during the 1970s.

Next the CIA turned the United Nations Security Council through about five points of the compass and pointed it at Libya. The third card in the deck was scheduled to fall before the November American presidential election. That way there would be a double bonus with decreased Arab production and more 'gung-ho' votes for the hawkish extremists. President Bush was starting to need votes badly. During the US slaughter of 70,000 innocent Iraqi women and children, his popularity rating rose as high as 90% but the glitter and glory was fast wearing off as decent Americans became aware of the tragic events in the Middle East.

Once again the tall, urbane Thomas Reeve Pickering went about his job with astonishing vigour, drumming up support for full-blown sanctions after failing to convince Libya that it should illegally hand over its citizens for a 'fair' trial in America or Scotland on the accusation of bombing Pan Am 103. Seemingly the Western intelligence agencies had suddenly found crucial evidence that Libya, rather than new

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coalition partner Syria, was responsible for the outrage. The Security Council was stretching the public's imagination to breaking point.

There is a very strong possibility neither Libya nor Syria was directly responsible for the downing of Pan Am 103. The timing of the crash indicates it may have been an Iranian order that sent Flight 103 earthwards after the downing of an Iranian Airbus, carrying a full load of women and children, by the USS Vincennes.

At the time of the Airbus crash the US Navy forgot to explain to the media that even if surface-to-air missiles are fired by mistake, every one of them has a 'self-destruct' charge that can be detonated by remote control in a split second. No explanation was offered as to why the missiles were not detonated long before they struck the Airbus. The Iranians must have been upset by the slaughter of their innocent women and children, and by the presentation of a special medal to the captain of the USS Vincennes by President Bush.

The Security Council, in its haste, completely ignored such trifling matters and pressed ahead with its charges against

Libya. Once again using the electronic media to maximum effect, Libya was slowly but surely turned into a 'guilty terrorist state' in the eyes of the television viewers. No matter the entirely correct procedures that Libya used to respond in terms of international law: the Security Council was going to 'punish' the country and its leader—just as the US had in 1986 on a trumped-up charge when it bombed Tripoli and Benghazi, leaving trails of murdered women and children strewn across both cities.

Apparently the 1986 sneak attack did not do enough damage in the eyes of Comte de Marenches, then head of the SDECE, the French version of the CIA. The Count berated the Americans for their inefficiency with staggering simplicity and arrogance: "Why, instead of killing a few women and children, did they not bomb the oilfields?"

Examining the massive levels of bomb damage and toxic uranium dust in Kuwait and Iraq, it seems entirely possible the CIA took the Count's rebuke to heart and was trying to atone for its 1986 'failure' in Libya. Worse still were grim pronouncements from the Security Council that "the use of force against Libya has not been ruled out".

The threat was obvious: another 88,000 tons of bombs with an accuracy of 3%, more than 70,000 dead innocent Libyan women and children, total destruction of the Libyan civilian infrastructure, plus starvation and death through savage sanctions—a high price to pay for following international law to the letter as Libya undoubtedly had.

As with most ideas hatched by psychotic megalomaniacs wishing to control the world by force, the Falklands game plan came unstuck. The CIA managed the massacre stages quite well (it always does) but flunked on the oil price increase needed for an effective transfer from Middle East to Falklands crude oil. Although it was openly reported on 7 December 1991 that British Petroleum, Shell and Occidental were expected "to bid for rights" in the Falklands, the oil price was already unstable again.

Too few people realise just how dangerous the CIA really is. If the Falklands scenario ever came to pass it would be the Western public who would ultimately have to bite the bullet, paying massive prices for Falklands crude oil in order to please an out-of-control US intelligence agency that is accountable to no one including the

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President of the United States.

Nor would the environmentalists fare well. The Falklands lie in one of the most environmentally sensitive and unspoiled areas of the globe. The South Atlantic is an extremely dangerous place to drill, with complete exposure to huge swells from the Southern Ocean and no shelter at all. There is no doubt that weather alone would easily exceed the structural design limits of all but the most sophisticated state-of-the-art offshore drilling rigs. The level of devastation created by the oil multinationals operating completely outside the scrutiny of environmental watchdogs like Greenpeace would be obscene in its totality. Who could possibly afford aircraft with the range to keep an eye on them? The simple answer is no one could.

During the last two years Kuwait has managed to produce a little oil, Iraq has exported some through Turkey, and certain European countries have so far managed to stop an all-out oil embargo against Libya. Overall, these factors have helped to push oil prices substantially lower than they were just after the destruction of Iraq and its people during 1991—certainly to the point where large-scale exploration of the

Falklands continental shelf would be a very high-risk financial venture.

Just how long that situation will last is uncertain, with the US now once more pushing hard for an oil embargo against Libya—an objective it will continue to struggle to achieve because the Falklands crude oil is a prize too heady to leave alone forever. In the years to come, the CIA might lose patience and start sending out 'friendly' probes towards Argentina. Exploration of the shelf from the Argentine mainland would cost much less, and would allow the US oil multinationals direct access without having to bother too much about junior partner Britain.

It has long been recognised the CIA has a considerable amount of blood on its hands, but never more so than now. Back in 1963 President John F. Kennedy acknowledged the dangers and vowed to "shatter the CIA into a thousand different pieces." Before the end of that year one of the greatest of all American presidents lay dead, the back of his head blown off by a high-velocity bullet fired by a marksman positioned ahead of his limousine.

Perhaps there is an American citizen out there with the sheer determination and resolve to complete what President John F. Kennedy vowed to do in 1963. ∞

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